




LIVE LINES

Woodbury County Rural Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

September 2024

Energy Trails Tours 2024 Educational and Fun Filled Three Days

Flip a switch, and the lights come on. Behind this simple action is a complex network of people, power plants, and transmission lines that work around the clock. Their mission: to ensure safe, affordable, reliable electricity to more than 140 member cooperatives in nine states.

Woodbury County REC through its generation and transmission cooperative Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative (NIPCO), is a member of Basin Electric Power Cooperative’s power supply system. This regional wholesale power supply cooperative has nearly 7,000 megawatts of generating capacity and 2,300 miles of high-voltage transmission lines all managed with you, the member-owner, in mind.

Woodbury County REC encourages members to get the inside story of how electricity is made. Learning about the big energy picture helps us all make smart choices from our households and businesses to the public policy arena.

NIPCO and its member cooperatives feel it is essential to provide an opportunity for members to get up-close and personal with the source of their electricity NIPCO purchases approximately 80% of its power supply from Basin Electric Power Cooperative and 20% from Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) which markets power generated from the Missouri River Dam System. NIPCO’s total blended generation portfolio from these suppliers includes electricity generated from coal, water, wind, natural gas, solar, and other sources.



Kim Brouwer

Over three educational and fun-filled days, the members visited the Oahe Power Plant and Dam at Pierre, South Dakota, the Great Plains Synfuels Plant, and Antelope Valley Power Station near Beulah, North Dakota.

The coal mine, Coteau Properties Company Freedom Mine was also visited where the tourists had the opportunity to see some of the largest earth moving equipment in the United States in action.

Members gained a deeper understanding of the cooperative difference, which included the history of rural electric cooperatives, the Seven Cooperative Principles that guide them, and the Touchstone Energy® brand’s four foundations of service: Integrity, Accountability, Innovation, and Commitment to Community.



Chris and Kathy Jacobsen



Jane and Jay Ingram



Brenda Hunter and Charles Nelson

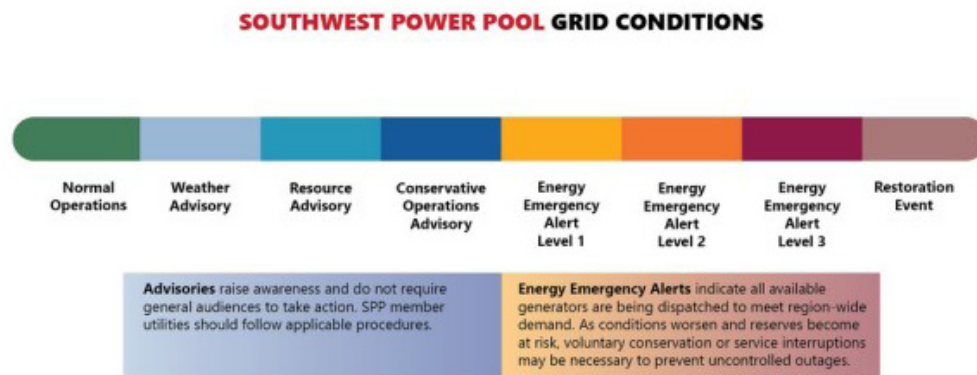
Reliable Grid Operations and Energy Emergency Alerts (EEA)

We live in a time when electricity is more important than ever for our personal and business needs. At the same time the nation is working to manage carbon emissions and incorporate renewable power generation. The operation of the electric grid is in constant motion of expansion and contraction and must be monitored continuously 24/7/365. While Woodbury County REC works hard every day to provide reliable electric service there are forces that are beyond our local control.

A matter of supply and demand – The grid must be balanced at all times, where the supply of electricity must match the demand very closely at any time despite the continuous variations on both sides. Regional Transmission Organizations monitor consumer demands for electricity and filters in the available generation of the various sources to match the ever-changing electricity demands.

Regional Transmission Organizations – Woodbury County REC’s transmission and power suppliers are members in the Southwest Power Pool (SPP). SPP is a Regional Transmission Organization (RTO) that is known as the Balancing Authority that monitors the grid in our area and calls available generators to come online or offline. Although there is a balancing between the demand for electricity and the supply of electricity. The RTO must balance the available supply of electricity as generators come online or offline. An example of a supply balance is when the wind is not blowing another generation source must be called online.

Notices and Advisories – The SPP issues advisory and Energy Emergency Alerts when severe weather or circumstances have substantial impacts on the reliability of the electric grid operations. The graphic below is used to illustrate the progression and level of severity of various advisories and alerts.



SPP Advisories and EEA level alerts are sent to our wholesale power provider, Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative (NIPCO) and they keep Woodbury Co. REC informed. If the EEA reaches Level 2 or 3, Woodbury Co. REC will begin notifying the membership.

EEA-Level 2, Woodbury Co. REC will be asking all members to conserve energy when possible to help prevent potential power supply issues. Conservation examples are to set your air conditioning system to 78 degrees, close window blinds, and curtains to keep rooms cooler, delay or refrain from using large appliances until late evening, and turn off unnecessary lights and ceiling fans.

EEA-Level 3, means there is an energy supply shortage across the region and is unable to meet the demand for power by electric users. An immediate reduction in electricity use is urgently needed. All Members will be asked to continue to conserve energy as much as possible, make any other conservation measures you can to reduce consumption, and be prepared for electric services outages.

Woodbury Co. REC Notification to Members during EEA Level 2 or 3 events – Woodbury Co. REC will alert members mostly using our Smart Hub web and smartphone app. Members that have registered for an account will receive these messages by email and phone application notifications. We encourage everyone to register as Smart Hub users to gain access to its many features. If you would like to receive text message notifications, you must manually set it up on Smart Hub by using these steps:

- Step 1. Settings
- Contact Methods
- Add Phone
- Enter Phone #
- Select Yes for receive text message

- Step 2. Settings
- Manage Notifications
- On Demand
- Select Text message
- Check box next to phone #

NIPCO will also be sending social media messages for level 2 and 3 events. We encourage you to sign up for their facebook page.

While Woodbury Co. REC employees and Directors work hard to provide you with safe, reliable, and affordable electric service we will continue to inform and educate the membership and public of potential reliability impacts due to grid operations.

Electricity: A Lasting Value for Woodbury County REC Member - Consumers

By Kent Amundson

As our lives become increasingly connected to digital conveniences, electricity plays a more vital role than ever before. From powering our homes to charging our devices, electricity is the backbone of modern living. Yet, despite this growing reliance, electricity remains a remarkably affordable and cost-effective resource for Woodbury County REC member-consumers. In fact, the average household is steadily spending less on electricity as a percentage of its income. This trend reflects both the efficiency of our electricity system and the value that electric cooperatives like Woodbury County REC continue to deliver.

Affordable and reliable power

In Iowa, a household served by an electric cooperative spends about \$5.25 per day on electricity. To put that into perspective, that's less than the cost of a sandwich or a specialty coffee drink. When you consider the essential services that electricity provides heating, cooling, lighting, and powering your appliances electricity is actually a bargain.

In Iowa, the average household served by electric cooperatives spends about

\$5.25 PER DAY FOR ELECTRICITY 

THAT'S CHEAPER THAN BUYING A SANDWICH OR SPECIALTY COFFEE DRINK!

Over the past 85 years, while most goods and services have increased dramatically, electricity has remained very affordable. Considering the vast improvements in service and technology that have been made during that time, this is no small feat. The stability in electricity prices can be attributed to the efficient management of resources by cooperatives like Woodbury County REC, where the focus is on keeping rates low and service quality high.

Investing in efficiency and innovation

At Woodbury County REC, we are committed to helping our member-consumers use energy wisely. We offer a variety of energy efficiency programs, energy assessments, load management programs and rebates designed to help you get the most value from every kilowatt-hour of electricity you use. By investing in these programs, we empower you to make informed choices about your energy consumption, which can lead to savings on your electric bills.

Additionally, through our SmartHub app, you can view and monitor your electricity usage. This digital tool allows you to track energy consumption patterns, set alerts for high usage and even pay your bill all from the convenience of your smartphone or computer. By giving you greater control and insight into your energy use, SmartHub helps you manage your electricity more effectively, potentially lowering your monthly expenses.

The cooperative difference – putting members first

One of the key reasons electricity remains such a good value for our members is the cooperative model itself. Unlike investor-owned utilities that are driven by profits, Woodbury County REC is a membership cooperative. This means our rates are cost-based, not profit-based. We work hard to control local costs and keep rates as low as possible while still investing in the technology and infrastructure needed to continuously enhance service, reliability and efficiency.

Let our services work for you

I encourage all our members to take advantage of the energy efficiency programs and services we offer. For more information about SmartHub, home energy assessments or other energy-saving programs, please contact our member services department at 800-469-3125 or visit our website at www.woodburyrec.com. We are here to help you make the most of your energy dollars.

Kent Amundson is the general manager/CEO of Woodbury County REC.

We're looking for students interested in public service and leadership

High schoolers who attend our Zoom sessions in October will have a chance to win AirPods and a \$1,000 college scholarship!

Guided by our cooperative commitment to community, Woodbury REC has a long history of supporting students in the communities we serve through scholarships.

Iowa's electric cooperatives are pleased to offer a virtual opportunity for rural students to learn more about advocacy, electric cooperative career opportunities and the cooperative business model with a three-part webinar series in October. The Iowa Youth Leadership Academy is open to any high school student in our service area and they are invited to register at www.IowaYouthTour.com.

This new program is perfect for rural Iowa students who have a passion for public service, leadership or government. We want to raise students' awareness of how local electric co-ops power people's lives and empower communities. We also want to talk about exciting cooperative career paths that are available in smaller communities.

Once students register online for the Iowa Youth Leadership Academy, they can attend the webinars from their own computer or mobile device. Each Zoom session will last around 45-60 minutes and focus on a specific topic:

- Tuesday, Oct. 1, 7:00 p.m. – Cooperative Business Model
- Thursday, Oct. 17, 7:00 p.m. – Rural Iowa Advocacy
- Thursday, Oct. 24, 7:00 p.m. – Leadership

At the end of each live session, one lucky attendee will be selected at random to win a pair of Apple AirPods. Students who attend all three sessions will be entered into a random drawing for a \$1,000 college scholarship. All students who register online by September 25 will receive a special box of co-op goodies in the mail.

During the Zoom sessions, students will be inspired by our lineup of speakers and presenters. Participants will learn how to advocate for issues that are important to them and build leadership skills from a motivational speaker.

Learn more at www.IowaYouthTour.com or contact helpdesk@woodburyrec.com or call 1.800.469.3125 for more information.

The Recipe Corner



Peanut Butter Chocolate Chip Cookies

1 cup softened margarine	2 ¼ cups flour
1 cup sugar	1 cup old fashioned instant oatmeal
2/3 cup brown sugar	2 teaspoon baking powder
1 cup creamy peanut butter	1/8 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon vanilla	¼ teaspoon salt
2 eggs	1-12-ounce package chocolate chips

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Mix the first five ingredients in a large bowl. Add the remaining ingredients and mix thoroughly. Drop teaspoon on ungreased cookie sheets. Bake for 10 minutes, don't overbake. Cool for a few minutes on a sheet. Move to rack for further cooling. Makes about 70 nice-sized cookies.

**WANTED:
Rural Iowa
high school
students
who have a
passion for
leadership**



Attend our webinar series in October for a chance to win Apple AirPods and a \$1,000 college scholarship! Learn more at IowaYouthTour.com